

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 196822 TOSEC 200169

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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FOR FUNSETH FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: DAILY NEWS BRIEFING: SOVIET NUCLEAR EXPLOSION

NO. 12

FOLLOWING ARE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AUGUST 5 AND 6 ON
EVANS AND NOVAK ARTICLE AUGUST 4 CONCERNING JULY 4/29 SOVIET
NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS:

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AUGUST 5, 1976

Q: WHAT ARE THE DATA EXCHANGE PROVISIONS THAT WE HAVE WITH
THE SOVIET UNION CONCERNING UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS?

A: THESE ARE RATHER COMPLICATED BUT THEY ARE AVAILABLE IN
THE PUBLIC RECORD. I WILL CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THE PRO-
TOCOLS IN THE TTB TREATY AND THE PNE TREATY (ACDA PUBLICA-
TION 87 WHICH PROVIDE THEM IN DETAIL).

Q: DID THE USSR AGREE FORMALLY OR OTHERWISE THAT THERE
WOULD BE NO TESTING ABOVE 150 KT BEFORE THE TREATY WENT INTO
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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 196822 TOSEC 200169

FORCE?

A: THERE WAS NO FORMAL AGREEMENT. THE 150 KT LIMIT IN THE TTB TREATY WAS INTENDED TO COME INTO EFFECT ON MARCH 31 OF THIS YEAR. WE HAD NOT COMPLETED THE PNE NEGOTIATIONS BY THAT DATE, WHICH WE SPECIFIED AS AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION PRIOR TO HAVING THE TTB TREATY TAKE EFFECT. HOWEVER, THE TWO SIDES SEPARATELY ISSUED PUBLIC STATEMENTS -- THE U.S. ON MARCH 31, THE SOVIET UNION ON APRIL 1 -- AS FOLLOWS:

U.S.: "FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, WE HAVE NO PLANS FOR HIGH YIELD WEAPONS TESTS ABOVE THE THRESHOLD OF 150 KT."

USSR: "... THE SOVIET UNION DOES NOT INTEND TO TAKE ANY ACTIONS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY, ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE U.S. WILL ACT IN THE SAME WAY."

Q: WHAT WOULD BE THE BASIS OF CONSULTATIONS IF THERE HAD BEEN NO AGREEMENT ON THE ABOVE?

A: THERE IS ALWAYS A BASIS FOR CONSULTATIONS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST -- PARTICULARLY IN A SITUATION SUCH AS THIS, WHERE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN UNDERWAY.

Q: HAS SECRETARY KISSINGER NOTIFIED CONGRESS OF THESE "VIOLATIONS"?

A: APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE CONGRESS AND STAFFS HAVE RECEIVED CLASSIFIED BRIEFINGS ON THESE MATTERS. HOWEVER, INASMUCH AS WE HAVE NOT YET COMPLETED OUR DATA ANALYSES, WE ARE NOT YET IN A POSITION TO SAY WITH ANY DEGREE OF CONFIDENCE INTO WHAT YIELD RANGES THESE SHOTS FALL. ADDITIONALLY, AS I POINTED OUT YESTERDAY, THERE IS NO LEGALLY BINDING COMMITMENT PRIOR TO ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE TREATY, AND THEREFORE IN THIS LEGAL SENSE IT WOULD NOT BE A VIOLATION.

Q: HAVE WE ASKED THE SOVIETS THE SIZE OF THEIR TWO MOST RECENT EXPLOSIONS?

A: NO.
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PAGE 03 STATE 196822 TOSEC 200169

Q: HAS THERE BEEN A PAST HISTORY OF PRECISE ESTIMATES OF BLAST SIZE?

A: ESTIMATES ARE THE RESULT OF A VERY COMPLEX PROCESS. WE DO NOT EXPRESS YIELDS IN PRECISE VALUES. (REFER TO ERDA FOR ANY FURTHER TECHNICAL ELABORATION.)

Q: IS THE QUESTION OF THESE TWO MOST RECENT TESTS BEING HANDLED DIFFERENTLY FROM PAST TESTS FOR POLITICAL REASONS?

A: NO. SUCH MATTERS ARE HANDLED WITH REFERENCE TO FOREIGN POLICY AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AUGUST 6, 1976

Q: WAS THE UPPSALA EVALUATION THAT THE FIRST TEST WAS PROBABLY A WEAPONS TEST AND THAT THE SECOND WAS A PNE PASSED ON TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT?

A: NO. HOWEVER, THE UPPSALA ANNOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING THEIR ESTIMATES OF SEISMIC MAGNITUDE ARE, OF COURSE, IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND WE ARE AWARE OF THEM.

Q: INSOMUCH AS THE STATE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATES IN ANNOUNCING SOVIET TEST BLASTS, WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA THAT THE DEPARTMENT USES FOR SUCH ANNOUNCEMENTS?

A: ERDA, NOT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, MAKES THE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FOREIGN NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS AND THE QUESTION SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THEM.

Q: WHAT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES WERE BRIEFED? WERE THE FULL COMMITTEES BRIEFED OR ONLY SELECTED MEMBERS? WHEN DID THESE BRIEFINGS TAKE PLACE? WAS THE THRUST AND CONTENT OF THESE BRIEFINGS THE SAME AS THE THRUST AND CONTENT OF THESE PRESS BRIEFINGS? WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR CLASSIFYING THESE CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS?

A: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE DOES NOT CONDUCT THE CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS ON THIS SUBJECT. I SUGGEST THESE QUESTIONS UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 STATE 196822 TOSEC 200169

BE DIRECTED TO ERDA.

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